1:Vaillant A-5 (1928-1936)1941 NU7 Aztec NU7

CHAPTER XV

THE AZTECS AFTER THEIR CONQUEST

The history of the Aztecs after the Conquest and suggestions for a tour through their domain

AZTEC civilization died, but the Aztecs still live. Remove 161
the pure-blooded Indian from Mexico, and you lose two fifths of the population; take out those with Indian blood in their veins, and a bare twentieth of the population will remain. The face of Mexico is an Indian face. Yet travel in Mexico and read its history, and you will see, as if in strata, the impress of the colonial period, the republic, the empire of Maximilian, the dictatorship of Diaz and the modern social thinking of the Revolution. The Indian civilization you do not see, except for its descendants, who are everywhere, who are the Mexican people. Though their outward aspect and their material and social culture are European, the stamp of the Aztec character is on their minds, just as the masonry of broken Aztec temples is built into the walls of their churches.[1]

The original purpose of the Crown and the Church was to 636
convert the Indian population into Spanish citizens with full civic rights. For two generations the authorities almost succeeded in their intent; but finally the individualism so emphasized in European culture broke through their legislative controls, and the white conquerors reduced the Indians to

11:Diaz T,H-5 (1519-1520) 1910
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Such springs were also to be seen in and around the Lake of Mexico, but not in such considerable numbers, and there must also have been one or more on the site of the City which supplied its earliest inhabitants with drinking water, although in later Indian times the supply was brought in an aqueduct from a fine spring near Chapultepec.

"The population of Tenochtitlan (the City of Mexico) at the time of the conquest is variously stated. No contemporary writer estimates it at less than sixty thousand houses, which by the ordinary rules of reckoning would give three hundred thousand souls. If a dwelling often contained, as it asserted, several families, it would swell the amount considerably higher."[1]

The supply of food for such a population must have been a matter of no little difficulty, for the soil on the hill-sides is scanty, many of the slopes are composed of *tepetatle*, a mixture of volcanic ash and scoria fit only for growing maguey,[2] and considerable surfaces are covered with lava and carry no loam at all. The scarcity of good soil must have led to an intensive cultivation, and this is also shown by the care with which manure was collected,[3] as is the case in China and Japan to-day.

Food must have been brought from very considerable distances, and the want of a sufficient supply from the near neighbourhood must have had much to do with the predatory nature of the Aztec dominion.

Note on the Drainage.

From the time of the Spanish settlement the security of the city from floods and the drainage of the valley became the preoccupation of the Spanish Viceroys. After a severe inundation in 1555, Don Luis de Velasco replaced the Albarradon of Netzahualcoyotl, which had fallen into decay, by a similar and shorter dyke somewhat nearer the city. At the beginning of the seventeenth century a French engineer, Henri Martin, known in Mexico as Enrico Martínez, planned a system of drainage and a cutting (known as the *tajo de Nochistongo*) through the mountain rim to the north-east of the valley, but this work was only partly carried out during the following years and was not completed until the end of the eighteenth century.

The flood of 1865 again brought the question of drainage into prominence, and new works, including a large canal and a large tunnel, were commenced and brought to a satisfactory conclusion in the year 1900.

The lakes of Zaltocan and Zumpango are now almost dry during the summer months. The Lake of Chalco has been drained dry,

[1] Prescott, *Conquest of Mexico*.
[2] The American aloe, *Agave americana*, from which pulque is made.
[3] Text page 72.

14:Bandelier E-4 (no date)1880 NU7 Aztec NU7

We have not the slightest reliable indication concerning the *strength* and numbers of that force.[11] This point is as vague and indefinite as the number of the population of the pueblo itself. Both, being closely connected, suffer from the same contradictions and exaggerations.[12] It is true that a "guard" of 10,000 men is mentioned as having occupied always the square of the main temple ("teocalli").[13] But, aside from the grossly exaggerated numbers, "guards," in the sense of a military body doing permanent duty, were unknown to the Mexicans.[14] The scanty mention of a body guard of Montezuma appears an imaginary tale if we look for its presence where and when it should have been most conspicuous: at the meeting of Montezuma and Cortés on the causeway,[15] and when Cortés carried that chieftain away from his house as a hostage. It is an established fact, that only unarmed Indians met Cortés on his entrance to Mexico, and it is equally positive, that no "guard" came to Montezuma's rescue.

stores in sufficient quantities for such a purpose. Within the pueblo of Mexico there was no need of being armed, and therefore every Mexican went unarmed in the pueblo. The "guards" of which Gomara and Bernal-Diez both speak, never existed. See Gomara ("En la ciudad nadie trae armas, ..." p. 345, vol. I, Vedia).

[11] Not even Bernal-Diez contains a statement. Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl ("Relaciones históricas," Relacion XIIIa, in Vol. IX of Lord Kingsborough's Antiquities of Mexico, "De la venida de los Españoles," translated also into the French by Mr. Ternaux-Compans, and published under the title of "Cruautés Horribles des conquérants "du Mexique," in the first series of his inestimable collection of translations) says: "the Mexicans lost over 240,000 men" during the siege of Mexico. The only reasonable approximate I found in Durán (Hist. de las Indias, etc., cap. XXXVII, pp. 287 and 288). Before the Mexicans (including Tezcuco and Tlacopan and the others of the valley) set out against Michhuacan, in 1479, they counted their forces and found 24,000 men ("allaron que auia veinte y cuatro mil combatientes"). This is possible.

[12] The population of Mexico is variously reported. The extremes are: 60,000 *souls* ("sessanta mila habitatori") of the "Anonymous Conqueror" (Col. de Doc., Icazbalceta. Vol. I, p. 391), and 60,000 *families*.

[13] The length of the walls of that square was "one cross-bow shot," after Gomara. How could 10,000 *men remain there always*, besides the priests and their numerous assistants?

[14] "Guardas" are mentioned by Bernal-Diez del Castillo ("Historia verdadera de la conquista de Nueva-España" in vol. II, of Sr. Vedia's collection, cap. XCV); by Gomara (p. 342 of vol. I, Vedia). Torquemada (Lib. II. cap. VI, p. 544, vol. II), and others. But Cortés and Andrés de Tapia make no mention of them.

[15] Three eye-witnesses of that celebrated meeting have described it: Cortés ("Cartas de Relacion," in Vedia, I, "Carta Segunda," p. 23). Bernal-Diez (Vedia, II, cap. LXXVIII, p. 83), and Andrés de Tapia ("Relacion hecha por el Señor Andrés de Tápia, sobre la conquista de Mexico," in vol. II, of Icazbalceta's Col. de Documentos, p. 578). Neither of them would have omitted to notice armed men among the Indians, had there been any with Montezuma.

The Mexicans, on their part, could not have failed to make an ostentatious display of armed soldiery, had they existed, when they met the armed strangers at the entrance to the pueblo.